

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (previously presented) A method executed by a server for enabling an expert to provide answers to questions received by the server from users in communication with a client interface, the client interface being identified to the users as a forum on a predetermined subject matter of the forum, the forum enabling users to direct questions to be answered to one or more of a plurality of experts represented as serving the forum, and the server being in communication with the client interface, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving at the server at least a first question directed to a first expert in the plurality of experts;

receiving at the server at least a second question representing one of (a) a question directed to the plurality of experts serving the forum, or (b) a question referred to the first expert by at least another expert in the plurality of experts;

receiving at the server a request by the first expert to access a personal expert interface, the personal expert interface being uniquely associated with the first expert;

the server providing the first expert with access to the at least one first question and the at least one second question upon generation of the personal expert interface, wherein the personal expert interface presents the at least one first question in a first grouping of questions directed to the first expert, and presents the at least one second question in a second grouping of questions directed either to the plurality of experts serving the forum, or directed to the first expert by the at least other expert in the plurality of experts.

2. - 6. (canceled)

7. (previously presented) The method of claim 176 wherein the received command further includes a second instruction to post an answer to the question.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

the server providing the first expert upon generation of the personal expert interface with access to an answer to at least one third question, the answer to the at least one third question having been previously provided by the first expert and posted by the server to the forum via the client interface of the forum, wherein the server causes the personal expert interface to present the answer to the at least one third question to the first expert in a third grouping of answers to questions previously answered by the expert; and

the server receiving a second command from the first expert via the personal expert interface to edit the answer to the at least one third question.

9. - 97. (canceled).

98. (previously presented) A system executed by a server for providing a plurality of answers from an expert to a plurality of questions posed by a plurality of users, the users communicating with the server via a plurality of client interfaces, each of the client interfaces being identified to the users as a forum on a predetermined subject matter of the forum and as presenting the expert as an expert on the subject matter, the system comprising:

a question receiving component configured to receive one of the plurality of questions at the server, the one question being directed to the expert from a user via one of the client interfaces;

a routing component configured to display the received question with other questions directed to the expert on a personal expert interface, wherein the personal expert interface is uniquely associated with the expert;

a command receiving and executing component configured to receive one or more commands from the expert together with an answer to the question, and to post the answer to the question, wherein the one or more commands provide that the answer to the question will be posted in two or more of the plurality of forums.

99. - 110. (canceled)

111. (previously presented) The system of claim 98 wherein the command receiving component is further configured to post the answer to one of (a) a source forum of the one client interface from which the user directed the question and at least one of the plurality of forums other than the source forum, (b) a plurality of forums excluding the source forum or (c) forums for each of the plurality of client interfaces.

112. (previously presented) The system of claim 111 wherein when the question is posted to a plurality of forums, the posting occurs in at least two forums at substantially the same time.

113., 114. (canceled).

115. (previously presented) The system of claim 98 wherein the expert is presented in one of the forums as one of a plurality of experts comprising a panel of experts, wherein the question is received by the server as directed by one of the plurality of users from the client interface of the one forum, and wherein said routing component is configured to route the received question, according to an instruction of the one user, either to (a) the expert alone, or to (b) each of the plurality of experts in the panel of experts.

116. - 117. (canceled).

118. (previously presented) The system of claim 98 wherein said question receiving component is configured to receive at least two questions directed to the expert via client interfaces identified with at least two different forums.

119. - 130. (canceled)

131. (previously presented) The method of claim 190 wherein the command further indicates permission from the one expert to post the answer to the one or more of the plurality of forums upon receipt of an additional answer from the other expert to whom the answer was referred.

132. - 140. (canceled)

141. (previously presented) A personal expert interface in communication with a server, the personal expert interface enabling a plurality of users and a plurality of experts to communicate a plurality of questions to a first expert in the plurality of experts via the server, in order to obtain answers from the first expert, the personal expert interface comprising :

a web page uniquely associated with the first expert, the web page presents a plurality of groupings of questions to be answered to the first expert, wherein the plurality of groups presented to the first expert includes a first group of questions directed to the expert via the server by the plurality of users, and a second group of questions directed to the first expert by others of the plurality of experts on referral, the referred questions having previously been directed to the other experts by ones of the plurality of users,

wherein the web page include a selectable command for posting an answer to at least one of the questions selected from at least one of the plurality of groupings, the at least one question being posted on one or more of a plurality of other web page accessible to the plurality of users.

142. (canceled)

143. (previously presented) The personal expert interface of claim 141 wherein each of the plurality of other web pages accessible to the plurality of users is identified to the users as a forum on a predetermined subject matter of the forum, the first expert being identified on at least one of the other web pages as an expert on the predetermined subject matter of the forum, and the selectable command providing an

instruction to post the answer to one of (a) a source forum of the one client interface from which the one user directed the question, (b) at least one one of the plurality of forums other than the source forum, (c) a plurality of forums including the source forum, (d) a plurality of forums excluding the source forum and (e) a forum of each of the plurality of client interfaces.

144. (previously presented) The personal expert interface of claim 143 wherein when the answer is posted to a plurality of web pages, the posting occurs in at least two web pages at substantially the same time.

145. (canceled).

146. (previously presented) The personal expert interface of claim 141 wherein at least one question from the second group of the questions is presented to the one expert for an initial answer.

147. (previously presented) The personal expert interface of claim 141 wherein at least one question from the second group of the questions is referred to the one expert by another one of the plurality of experts, the referred question provided by the other expert together with an answer to the question, the referral being made by the other expert to obtain a supplemental answer to the question from the one expert as a peer review of the answer provided by the other expert.

148.- 154. (canceled).

155. (currently amended) The method of claim 190 wherein the received command further includes a private message for the other expert.

156. - 169. (canceled)

170. (previously presented) The method of claim 155 wherein the private message accompanies the includes instructions to the other expert to post the answer upon review of the question by the other expert.

171. (previously presented) The method of claim 170 further comprising step of the server receiving an instruction from the other expert to post the first answer.

172. - 175. (canceled).

176. (currently amended) A method executed by a server of presenting questions of a ~~predetermined subject matter~~ that are submitted by at least one of a plurality of users to at least two experts ~~on the predetermined subject matter~~, the questions being submitted via one of a plurality of client interfaces, each of the plurality of client interfaces being identified to the users as a forum on ~~a the~~ predetermined subject matter of the forum, and the forum presenting at the at least two experts as experts on the corresponding subject matter of the forum, the method comprising the steps of:

the server receiving a question submitted by one of the plurality of users via one of the plurality of client interfaces identified as a forum;

the server routing the submitted question for presentation to the one expert;

the server presenting the question to the one expert via one of a plurality of personal expert interfaces, each personal expert interface being uniquely associated with one of the at least two experts and in communication with the server; and

the server receiving a command via the personal expert interface of the one expert, the received command including an instruction for the server to route the question to another one of the at least two experts via a personal expert interface of the other expert.

177. (previously presented) The method of claim 176 wherein the received command further includes an answer to the question and a second instruction to post the answer to one of (a) a source forum, the source forum being identified with the one client interface from which the question was submitted, (b) at least one one of the plurality of forums other than the source forum, (c) a plurality of forums including the source forum, (d) a plurality of forums excluding the source forum and (e) forums identified with each of the plurality of client interfaces.

178. (previously presented) The method of claim 177 wherein when the answer is posted to a plurality of forums, the posting occurs in at least two forums at substantially the same time.

179. - 185. (canceled)

186. (previously presented) The method of claim 176, further comprising the steps of:

the server receiving a second question via another one of the plurality of client interfaces identified as another forum; and

the server routing the second question to the one expert.

187. - 189. (canceled)

190. (previously presented) The method of claim 176 wherein the received command includes an answer to the question, and the routing instruction further instructs that the answer be routed together with the question to the other expert, thereby requesting a peer review by the other expert of the answer provided by the one expert.

191. (canceled)

192. (previously presented) The method of claim 176 further comprising the step of the server receiving a second command from the other expert, the second command including at least one answer to the question, the one answer being provided by the one expert, by the other expert, or by both experts.

193. (previously presented) The method of claim 192 wherein the answer from the other expert is posted to at least one web page of the one client interface.

194. (previously presented) A method executed by a server for providing answers from an expert via at least two client interfaces, each of the at least two client interfaces identified to users as a forum on a predetermined subject matter of the forum, whereby one or more users may choose to visit a forum, the expert being presented simultaneously in each of the at least two of the forums, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving at the server at least two questions, one of the at least two questions being submitted via each of the at least two forums in which the expert is simultaneously presented;

routing the at least two questions to the expert via the server;

presenting the at least two questions to the expert by means of a personal expert interface, wherein the personal expert interface is uniquely associated with the expert,

receiving at least two commands at the server via the personal expert interface of the expert, wherein a first one of the at least two commands includes a first answer to a first one of the questions submitted from one of the at least two forums and a first instruction instructing the server to post the first answer, and the second one of the at least two commands includes a second answer to a second one of the questions submitted from another one of the at least two forums and a second instruction instructing the server to post the second answer.

195.-201. (canceled)

202. (previously presented) The method of claim 194 wherein the first and second instructions instruct the server to respectively post the first and second answers each to one of (a) a source forum, the source forum being identified with the forum from which the question was submitted and at least one of the at least two forums other than the source forum, (b) two or more of the at least two forums excluding the source forum, or (c) each of the at least two forums.

203. (previously presented) The method of claim 202 wherein when either of the first or second answers is posted to two or more of the at least two forums, the posting occurs in the two forums at substantially the same time.

204. - 215 (canceled)

216. (previously presented) A method, executed by a server, for an expert to provide answers to questions presented by a plurality of users, the users communicating with the server via a plurality of client interfaces, each of the client interfaces being identified to the users as a forum on a predetermined subject matter of the forum, the forum enabling users to present questions and to view questions and answers relating to the predetermined subject matter of the forum, the method comprising the steps of:

the server generating at least two forums;

the server receiving a question presented by a user accessing a first one of the at least two forums;

the server posting the question in a location on the server accessible to the expert;

the server presenting the question to the expert via a personal expert interface uniquely associated with the expert, and on which the question is displayed for the expert to answer;

receiving at the server a command via the personal expert interface from the expert in response to the question, wherein the command includes an answer for responding to the question and an instruction, wherein the instruction instructs the server to post the answer to the first forum accessed by the user to present the question and to at least a second one of the at least two forums, at which the question was not presented by the user.

217. (new) The method of claim 192, wherein the second command further includes an instruction to post the at least one answer to one of (a) a source forum, the source forum being identified with the one client interface, (b) at least one of the plurality of forums other than the source forum, (c) a plurality of forums including the source forum, (d) a plurality of forums excluding the source forum and (e) forums identified with each of the plurality of client interfaces.

218. (new) The method of claim 217, wherein the at least one answer is posted to a plurality of forums, and the posting occurs in at least two forums at substantially the same time.

219. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein the second grouping presents questions routed by the server to each of the plurality of experts, the plurality of experts comprising a panel of experts serving at least one of the plurality of forums, the second grouping of questions including one or more questions posted by one or more of the plurality of users in the at least one forum, the one or more questions including: (a) questions directed to the panel of experts by the one or more users, and (b) questions posted to the at least one forum by the one or more users without expert designation.

220. (new) The system of claim 98 wherein the expert is presented in one of the forums as one of a plurality of experts comprising a panel of experts, wherein the question is received by the question receiving component from the client interface of the one forum without direction by the

user to any of the plurality of experts comprising the panel, and wherein said routing component is configured to route the received question to each of the plurality of experts in the panel of experts.